

# Eliminating Menthol Cigarettes



Menthol has a minty flavor that can mask the harsh taste of tobacco, make smoke feel easier to inhale and can make it harder to quit smoking. Studies show that tobacco companies have aggressively marketed menthol cigarettes to Black communities from the 1950s to today, and nationally, tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable death among Black Americans.



There are actions that states and communities can take to make flavored commercial tobacco products less available:

- In 2009, the FDA gained the authority to ban sales of all characterizing flavors in cigarettes – except menthol. Communities that have limited the sale of flavored products have seen the odds of residents (including young people) using any type of tobacco products or trying flavored tobacco products go down.
- A 2011 study that modeled what could happen if the U.S. banned sales of menthol cigarettes nationwide estimated that, by 2050, such a policy could save more than 600,000 lives, including the lives of nearly 250,000 Black people.

# Taking Action in Omaha

The Omaha metro area must pursue a public policy to eliminate the sale and distribution of mentholated cigarettes and other flavored tobacco. In doing so, our city would join more than 230 other municipalities.

MOTAC calls upon Omaha and Douglas County elected leaders to take action. Doing so would represent a major milestone in reducing the outsized toll tobacco products take on Black communities – as well as fostering a healthy Omaha for everyone.



The Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC) formed in 1992 to strengthen tobacco prevention and control efforts in the Omaha metro area.

We lead Douglas County in addressing nicotine and tobacco-related issues through:

- Public policy
- Education
- Community action

As we work to pass policy, develop programs and spread campaigns, we can always use your help.

Get involved at  
[MOTAC.org](https://www.MOTAC.org)



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